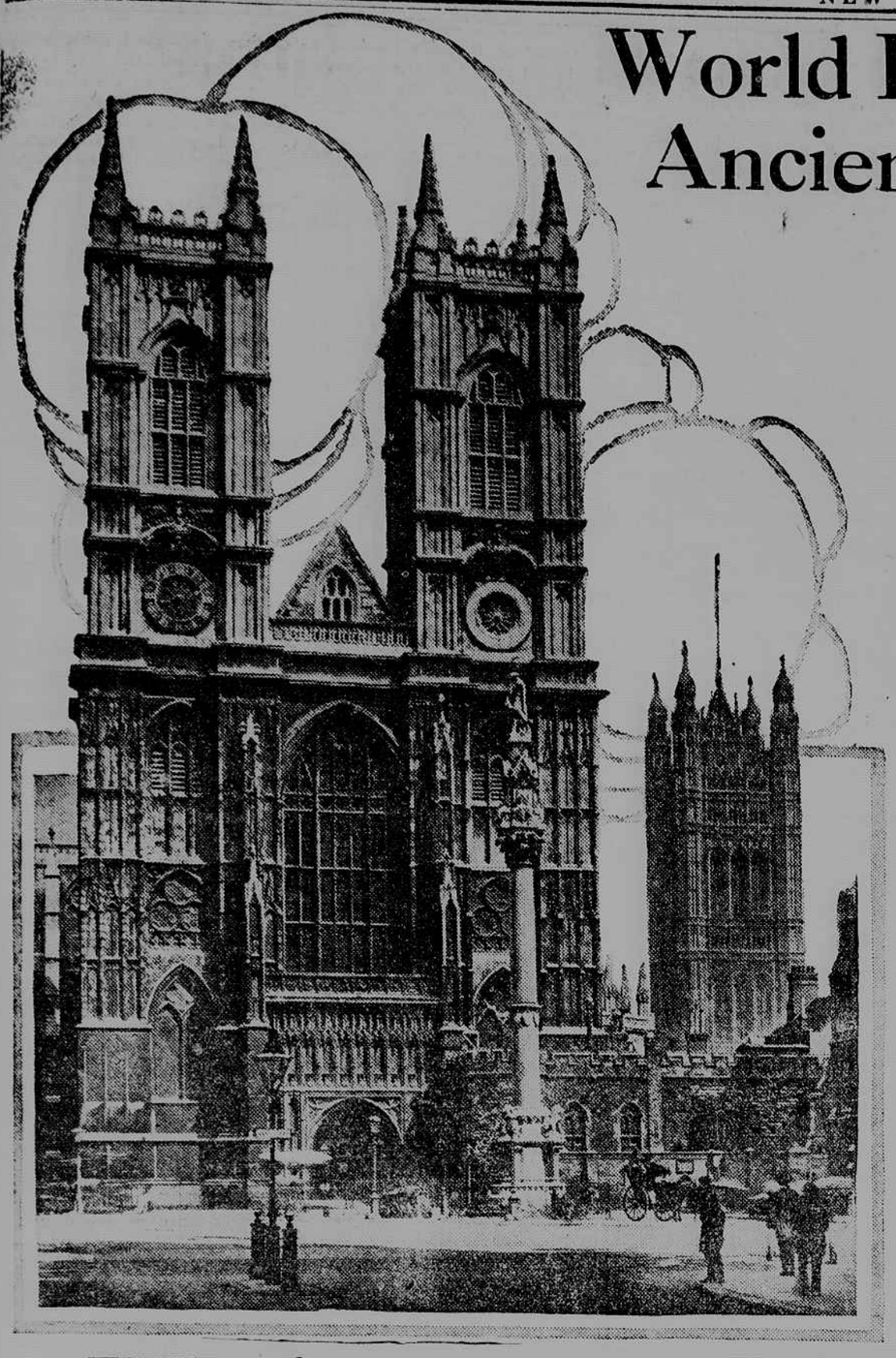
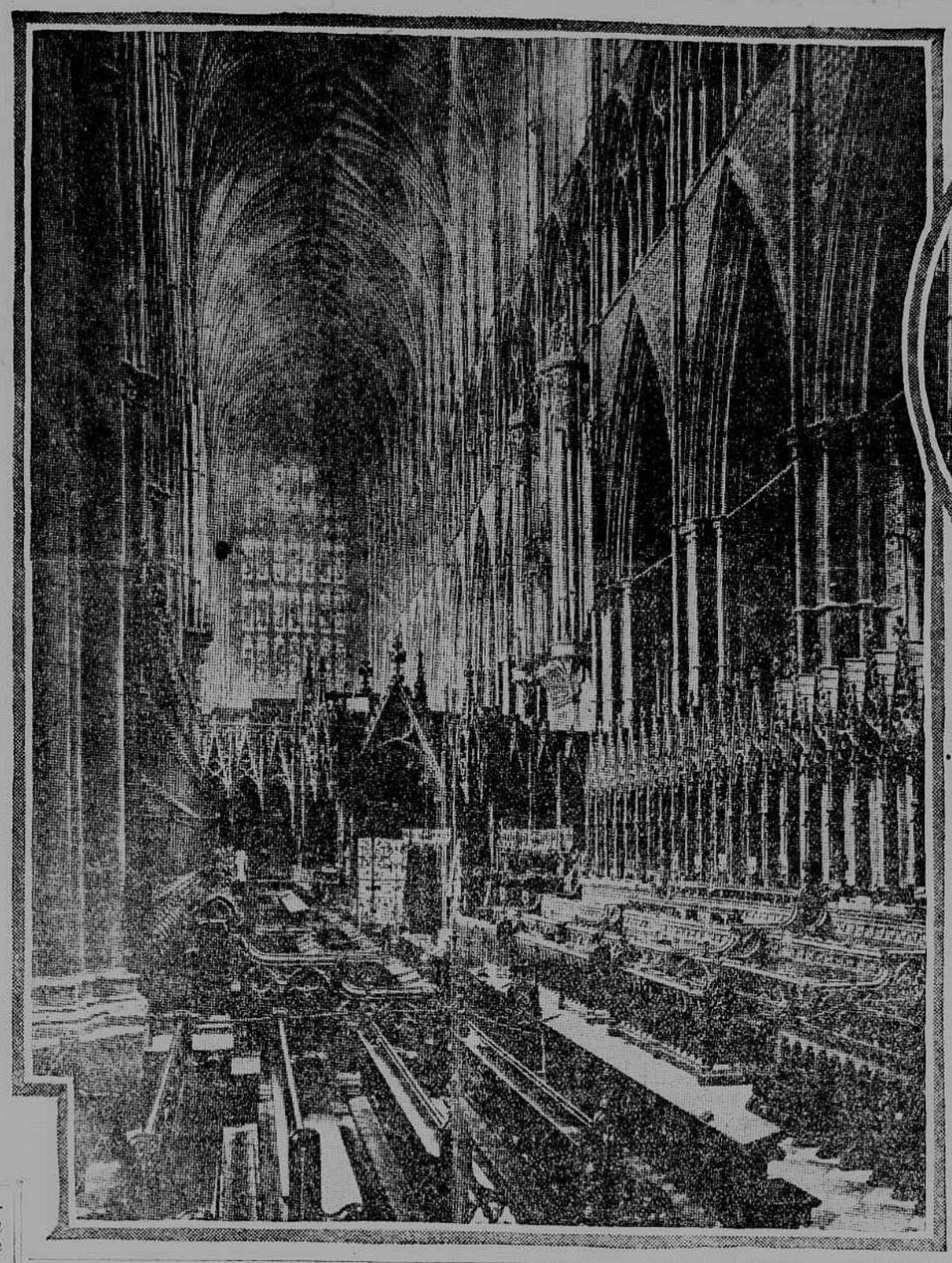
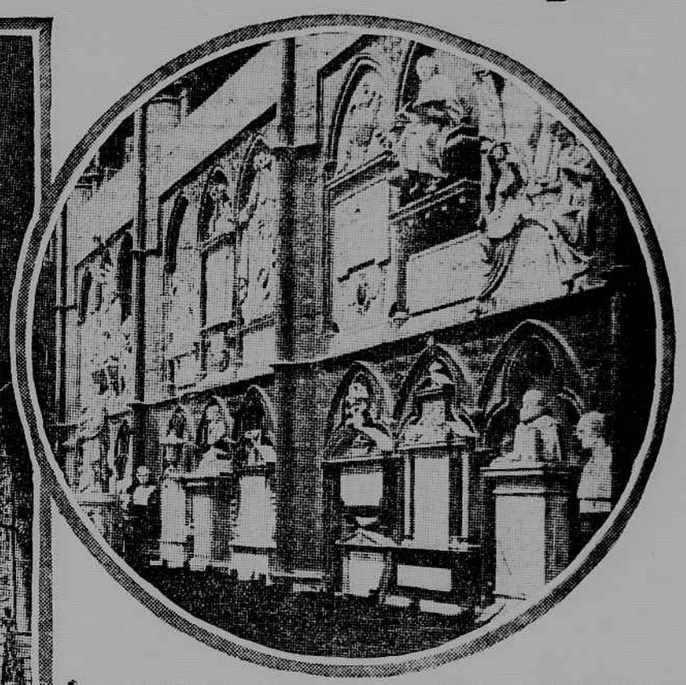
# World Is Asked to Save Westminster Abbey; Ancient Walls of Famous Structure Need Repair



*EXTERIOR of Westminster Abbey, the Walhalla of the English-speaking race*



*"NO OTHER spot in the empire contains within such narrow space so many illustrious citizens," wrote Lord Macaulay of Westminster Abbey, who himself now lies there*



*A SECTION of "The Poets' Corner," the one part of the Abbey which no visitor fails to see*

SAVE Westminster Abbey!

This is the gist of the appeal issued by the Dean of Westminster to "the English-speaking peoples of the world" for a fund of $1,000,000 to cover urgent repairs and insure future maintenance.

The high cost of everything, the appeal says in effect, has visited "the most historic and most beloved sacred building in the empire," a monument not only of English Christianity, but of the spiritual and cultural union of the English-speaking world. With the enormous rise of the cost of materials and labor the money available for maintenance has become utterly inadequate. For years the abbey has existed on borrowings, and its guardians now face bankruptcy. And the abbey is "in danger of entering upon a phase of steady structural deterioration."

There is no one danger that confronts the abbey, it is only that the great age of the walls make necessary constant efforts to keep them strong. The danger, even before the war, was recognized and the work of restoration had been begun, but naturally this was discontinued to a large extent, owing to the larger need of combating the power of Germany.

### The Treasure of the Race

"Can any sacred building in the British Empire compare with Westminster Abbey? Is it not the unique and priceless treasure of the English-speaking race? Such was the exclamation uttered by an American friend of mine whom I was taking round the abbey," writes Bishop Ryle, the Dean of Westminster, in the Westminster Abbey Appeal Number of "The London Times," and continues:

"It was not made in the tone of rhetorical compliment, but with the intense conviction of one who had quite suddenly been awakened to a full sense of the significance of this great inheritance from our common Anglo-Saxon ancestry. It is the same story if you take round friends or visitors who have just come from Canada, or Australia, or New Zealand, or South Africa, and who have never before been in the mother country. One feels overwhelmed and humiliated in the presence of their delighted enthusiasm, their reverence for the historic associations of the building, their appreciation of its antiquity, their emotion at the sight of places and things of which they have so often heard. Familiar as it is to some of us, to them the abbey is the heart shrine of the world-wide empire. The thought of it is intertwined with the most sacred feelings and deepest affections of brothers and sisters scattered over the whole world."

### A History in Stone

Westminster Abbey has been called "the history of the English race set in stone." In a sense, it is the symbol of English monarchy; for Harold, the last Saxon King, was crowned here; so was William the Conqueror, in 1066; so was ever since every English King. Yet, as "The London Times" says of the abbey:

"It is no history of a dynasty or of a kingdom that speaks here. It is the history of a race in every branch of human activity, told generation after generation by the hands that, through good days and through evil, carried and handed down the torch. There is scarce a field of thought or of action, scarce a department of science or a branch of art, which is not represented, and gloriously represented, in these bounds. It is this largeness and universality which are unique in the abbey. In other lands splendid sepulchers have been set apart as the last resting places of emperors and of kings.

"Deeply as these great repositories of the great dead must move all educated men, the story they have to tell is short and confined to that embodied here. That is all-embracing, unbroken, widening down from Hastings to the great war, from the Saxon Witan and the King's Council to the Parliaments of the empire and, not less truly if less directly, to the Congress of the United States."

Of the earliest origins of Westminster Abbey H. F. Westlake, its custodian, writes:

### Early History

"It is not surprising that a wealth of legend should surround the earliest history of the abbey of Westminster. The appeal to remote antiquity and the claim to a royal foundation alike had their uses in the defense of privilege. You may believe if you will that King Lucius built here a Christian church upon the site of a Roman temple conveniently destroyed by an earthquake in the year 154. You may believe if you can that St. Peter came in person to consecrate a second church built in the seventh century by Sebert, King of the East Saxons. You may call the fish depicted on the tiles of the chapter house and refectory a luce or a salmon in defense of the one or the other of these legends and appeal to the preservation of St. Peter's cope in connection with the latter, but it must be confessed that Sebert's name was not introduced into abbey history until five centuries after his death. It is better, here at least, to pass to buildings of which there is still evidence in stone.

"Edward the Confessor in his exile in Normandy made, it is said, a vow that if he should return in peace to England he would make pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Peter at Rome. From this vow he was released on condition of building a church and monastery in honor of God and Apostle. Eastward of a small Saxon church restored probably by St. Dunstan, the King built a stately church in the Romanesque style, shorter probably by some three bays than the present structure, but not unworthy to compare with it in dignity. There is reason to suppose that the general plan followed that of the abbey church at Jumièges, and that, like the earlier church there, the presbytery consisted of two bays and a vaulted apse. By the year 1220, however, when the first stone of the old Lady Chapel was laid, an ambulatory must have been added, unless the new chapel was to be an entirely detached building. It may well be that this addition was made preparatory to the first translation of St. Edward in 1163, but this is only conjecture. Of St. Edward's church the remaining portions are scanty but important."

### Under the Reformation

With the Reformation the days of the mitered abbot and the black-robed Benedictine monks passed. Their place was taken by a dean and a chapter of canons. Under Cromwell's revolution the abbey was degraded and humiliated. The chapter was ejected, the services changed, the choir turned into a kind of preaching house, and damage of all description was done. With the return of the Stuart kings the abbey also was restored to its ancient glory and dignity.

Up to the first years of the eighteenth century the main building of the abbey remained incomplete, inasmuch as the towers were not erected as originally planned. The present-day towers are ascribed to Wren, the great English architect of the seventeenth century; in fact, the undertaking was carried out by Wren's pupil, Hawkesmor, though the influence of the former may be seen to some extent in the design.

The historic significance of the abbey is analyzed by "The Times" as follows:

"The choice made by William the Conqueror of the abbey as the place of his coronation was decisive of its destiny. From that Christmas Day of 1066 until now every king and every queen regnant in the long line of English sovereigns has been anointed and acclaimed on the same spot. Since Edward I brought the mystic stone of Scone from Scotland—the stone on which the legend tells the Patriarch Jacob slept in Bethel, the Stone of Destiny from the sacred hill of Tara brought across the Irish Sea by the Scots—each of them has sat in the oaken chair in which the great Plantagenet encased it.

### Cromwell Sat in It

"Cromwell himself did not choose wholly to break with that august tradition. He could not venture to be crowned in the abbey, but, with that true instinct for some of the deepest feelings of English hearts that was his, his highness the Lord Protector ordained that in the scarce less venerable hall he should be installed in the appointed seat of kings. A wise policy, doubtless, led the Conqueror to assume the crown of England in the church and before the tomb of her last Saxon king, and the same consideration weighed with his first successors.

"The Saxons clung fondly to the memory of the last sovereign of their race. They honored him as a national saint, and in 1161 the great Pope Alexander III, the successful head of the Lombard League against the Emperor Barbarossa, canonized him at the request of Henry II. The body of the saint was translated at midnight on October 13, 1163, by Abbot Lawrence, the first mitered abbot of Westminster, in the presence of Thomas à Becket; and a century later Henry III, the second founder of the abbey, laid it in the shrine where it still reposes.

"The rich and elaborate decoration of this resplendent tomb, glowing with porphyry and rare marbles, with brilliant mosaics and colored glass, and with the best work of the goldsmith's art, has for the most part disappeared, but the fragments which survive and the beautiful pavement before the high altar suggest that both were the work of masters from the great Roman school of the Cosmati.

### The Work of Henry

The church of to-day, the church of history since the thirteenth century, is essentially the creation of Henry; though a hundred years were to go by before Abbot Litlyngton laid the first stone of the nave replacing the Confessor's work. Henry V made further additions to this part of the building, terminated two years before it rang with the 'Te Deum' for Agincourt.

"But we must not linger by the tombs of the royal dead which cluster round the saintly shrine—not even by the chantry of Henry himself, where the battered helmet of Agincourt towers on high and with the royal shield blazoned with the fleurs-de-lys and the saddle of that transcendent day ranks among the most precious relics of the monarchy. Neither may we dwell upon the glorious chapel where the first of the Tudors lieth buried, writes Lord Bacon, in one of the stateliest and daintiest monuments of Europe, both for the chapel and the sepulcher.

"That was to be the last great addition to the fabric, save the ugly west tower. Tudors and Stuarts lie thickly in this miracle of architecture 'that looks so far exceeding human excellence a man would think it was knit together by the fingers of angels.'

### Rivals Lie Together

"There Elizabeth and Mary rest in the same tomb. There are the graves of Mary Queen of Scots, of the statesmen who determined her death and of the judge who spoke her doom. There are the mortal remains of the frail invalid who occupied the throne the Stuarts had forfeited and whose matchless sagacity and indomitable courage baffled the policy and stayed the aggression of the greatest of the Bourbon kings. There, too, are the first and second sovereigns of the House of Brunswick. And there, more eloquent than any monument, a plain slab marks the vault from which the moldering remains of the great Oliver were torn, to be gibbeted and to be buried at the gallows foot.

"All the earth is the tomb of famous Englishmen," writes "The Times." "They lie studded over this island singly or grouped in Winchester, in St. Paul's, in a score of historic cathedrals and churches only a little less renowned than this, while not a few, and of the greatest, sleep their last sleep in distant lands. Accident, affection for the place they first called home, or for the dear ones buried there, a proud scorn in death of the highest of posthumous honors, or a conviction of their nothingness, have kept from these precincts many with the fullest claim to all the glory they can register or can bestow.

"Westminster is no Valhalla established by ordinance and decree. Its prerogative as the seal to greatness in all fields has been slowly molded, like all unchangeable traditions, by the operation of many causes working together through great periods of time. The shrine of the royal saint predetermined it to be the burial place of kings; the companions and the servants of kings were laid near the graves of their royal masters; greatness in the state drew to itself greatness in the other walks of life.

### Famous Names

"The names crowd upon us. Cecil, Villiers, Blake, the restorer of the great tradition of the navy; Monk, who brought back the king; James Butler, Duke of Ormond, among the stoutest champions of the Stuart cause; Mr. Pepys' Earl of Sandwich; the great Clarendon, who portrayed for us with the hand of a master the men of his troublous time; the Bentincks and the Schombergs of King William's struggles in Flanders and in Ireland; John, Duke of Argyll, best known to most as Jeanie Dean's Duke in 'The Heart of Midlothian'; Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Henry Grattan, Castlereach, Canning, Palmerston, Gladstone—so comes the long line down to our own day.

"Not less splendid is the array of poets and of men of letters, from Chaucer to Browning and Tennyson. Spenser and Dryden, Beaumont and Ben Jonson, Prior and Gay, Dr. Johnson; Macaulay, who has written so finely of the great temple and has painted with stangely heightened lights and darkened shadows so many of its denizens, are among them. There, too, with a popularity probably the widest, if not the most enduring, of all, is Charles Dickens, over whose pages two generations have already laughed and wept."

### The Abbey and the War

A chapter of war history is told in "The Times" by the Dean of Westminster, who relates the vicissitudes of the abbey during the period of air raids. He writes:

"When the war broke out it was hardly believed that London was likely to be assailed from the air. But as time went on the menace became evident. The counsels of those who at first had said, 'Oh, there is no practical danger; they will never get as far as London, and if they do, you can safely take the risk of not being hit,' could not possibly be followed by those on whom the chief responsibility rested. We decided to do all that was possible for the protection of the chief treasures of the abbey and to give assurance to the public that nothing had been neglected.

Needless to say, many interesting and fantastic suggestions reached me, displaying more sympathy with the security of the building than practical knowledge of the cost or of the feasibility of the recommendations. What we did may be grouped under three heads—(1) The removal of treasures to a safe place; (2) The protection of certain conspicuous monuments, and (3) The substitution of wood for glass in four of our most ancient stained glass windows.

"(1) The following objects were removed to the crypt under the chapter house: The coronation chair; the old processional shield and sword; the saddle, shield and helmet associated with King Henry V; the five full size bronze effigies of King Henry III, King Edward III, King Richard II, Queen Anne of Bohemia, Queen Eleanor of Castille and the effigy of William de Valence and two or three score of stone statuettes in the niches of King Henry V's chantry, which, not having any structural fastening, were liable by concussion to be shaken down and splintered to fragments on the pavement below; the wooden top of the Confessor's tomb, made by Abbot Feckenham; the picture of King Richard II; the tapestry hangings, the banners of the Knights of the Bath and the old altar frontal.

### Protected by Bags

"(2) A strong protective structure consisting of balks of timber and sandbags was erected over the Confessor's tomb. No less than 1,100 sandbags were used for this purpose. A similar erection was raised over the beautiful tomb of King Henry III. Sufficiently substantial shields of timber and many sandbags were placed over the marble effigy of Queen Philippa. Queen Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots disappeared from view under small mountains of sandbags. The Lady Margaret received similar attention. And a particularly substantial breastwork and covering of timber and sandbags formed a solid protection for the glorious monument of King Henry VII and his queen at the east end of Henry VII's chapel. Nothing could probably have averted the destruction caused by a direct hit. But what was most to be feared was the crashing of stone and timber fragments from the roof.

"(3) The glass was removed from the three east clerestory windows and from the west windows of the north aisle of the nave. Wood slats were substituted, which, though much more drafty, were infinitely less costly than plain glass. The very ancient glass in the Jerusalem Chamber was also removed and put in safety.

"As a matter of fact, the abbey was not touched by any hostile missile. A harvest of our own shrapnel was collected. But the building passed unharmed through all the terrible time of the raids. A large German bomb fell about twenty-five yards to the southwest, just grazing the wall of the Abbey Choir School and making a huge hole in the courtyard at the back. But it did not explode. The damage was trifling, and the choristers, who were being kept during the raid on a lower floor and were singing merrily under the barrage, were at the time quite unconscious of their extraordinary escape.

### Whole Abbey Quivered

"During the raids most of the occupants of the official houses repaired for greater security to the so-called Norman undercroft in the cloisters, a vast chamber beneath the old monks' dormitory, with stout massive Norman columns and a strong stone-groined roof. Being desirous as far as possible to be on the spot in case anything should happen to the abbey, we in the deanery used to go to the foot of a little stone staircase leading up to the southern of the two western towers. It was possible thus to be in the building and see the watchmen and learn what was going on. The whole abbey seemed to quiver while the heavy barrage was being fired; the windows rattled, and the roar of the guns seemed in the empty abbey to produce an extraordinary resonant effect.

"Very careful precautions had been taken against fire breaking out in the roof. Watchmen were on guard every night. They were specially reinforced on the occasions when notice was given of hostile attack. The water tanks were in good order; the hydrants and hosepipes were continually tested; large numbers of buckets were ready, some filled with sand and some with water. I dare say, if the emergency had arisen, we could not have done much. But the staff were keen, well disciplined and brave, and never held back from arriving even while the barrage was raging.

"We look back upon those nights and we realize how powerless we were to avert the most terrible catastrophe. The relief when the end came was the measure of the tension which we had all been experiencing. We perhaps only then realized how tremendous had been the responsibility of our trust, how profound our thankfulness for the greatness of our deliverance: *Deo gratias!*

"Within three weeks of the armistice being signed everything had been restored to its proper place, save only the windows, which are still undergoing a very necessary cleaning and thorough repair. The coronation chair reappeared in its wonted place, and on the morning of December 29, 1918, the Holy Communion was once again celebrated at the altar of the Shrine of Edward the Confessor. Our hearts on that day were very full, and the opening words of the old psalm seemed to rise unbidden to our lips: 'If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say.'"

## College Gives Mackaye a Home

PERCY MACKAYE, dramatist, is getting something new in fellowships from Miami University, a small Ohio college in the village of Oxford, on a brook that the Indians named the Tallawanda.

President R. M. Hughes has agreed to pay him a professor's salary and provide a house free for the author and Mrs. Mackaye and their three children and not require Mackaye to do any teaching.

He will simply live there, work on his plays and pageants in a studio being built for him in the forest that is part of the campus, and meet the more gifted English students around a large open fireplace there in the winter time.

Oxford may become an artists' colony similar to Cornish, N. H., Mackaye's present home. The Western College, also located there, has just granted a similar fellowship in music to Edgar Stillman-Kelly, composer, whose oratorio, "The Pilgrim's Progress," featured the musical festival that Walter Damrosch, of the New York Symphony Orchestra, staged in the 71st Regiment Armory last Spring.

"Oxford would be a splendid place for a bird sanctuary," Mackaye says. "The lower part of Miami's campus, which is quiet and full of great oaks, beeches and elms, would be ideal. There it would be easy to put the birds on friendly terms with people. And all around Miami are hundreds of places where an outdoor stage might be arranged. The bird sanctuaries would be beautiful in connection with this.

"Ernest Harold Bains, a friend of John Burroughs, has invented a feeding trough for birds. It has outspreading wings that the wind turns to protect the birds while they feed."

Mackaye hopes to establish a community theater in Oxford. Associated with him there will be Dr. A. H. Upham, whose anti-Bolshevist masque, "The Tri-Color," is being given on the campus this month.

Mackaye was born in New York and has lived in Rome, Leipsic and London. He has lectured at Columbia University, Harvard and Yale, and has written masques for events where President Wilson and William Howard Taft as President have been honor guests. E. H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe played his tragedy, "Jeanne d'Arc," here and in London.

Whitelaw Reid, former Ambassador to Great Britain and former editor of The New York Tribune, was a graduate of Miami University in the Civil War period, and as war correspondent reported the exploits of other graduates. The school has started a campaign for a million dollars to support the demands of a constantly increasing student body.